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PUBLIC CHARITY.

The following paper was read by Mr. George W. Bond before the gathering held in this city, recently, under the joint auspices of the American Association for the Promotion of Science and the Boston Social Association:—

THE TEMPORARY HOME FOR THE DESTITUTE.

In the latter part of 1846, a poor shoemaker, who was well-known in the court rooms and all the abodes of misery and sin in the city, the devoted friend of all who were in trouble, John Augustus, stated to some gentlemen that he daily felt the necessity of a Temporary Home, where the objects of his charity, adults as well as children, could be placed, until more permanent arrangements could be made for them. These gentlemen were so forcibly impressed by his statements that they invited him to attend the social conference meeting of the church, to which they belonged, and talk over the matter. In his plain and earnest way, he so distinctly proved the absolute need of such a place, especially for children, that it was then and there determined to establish one. Several of the brethren of moderate means united and became responsible for the rent of the house, and one of the sisters who had been born in affluence, but who had been ripened for Christ and his work in the school of adversity, offered her services as matron, and other earnest men and women of other churches and creeds joined them, all believing that it was the work of the Lord, and would be prospered. Nor in this were they disappointed. The subscriptions came in freely to meet the expenses, but the work was greater than had been counted upon, and there were days when it seemed dark and lowering; but the oft-repeated unexpected sources whence aid would come were sufficiently marked to stagger the doubts of the greatest skeptic in special providence.

The field was new and untried, even for children. We had not then the experience of any Children's Aid Society in Boston or New York, for neither of these institutions, which have accomplished such an immense amount of good, were then in existence.

Mr. Augustus's mission was to the unfortunate

women and children who were arrested for crime, and there was found to be a difficulty in providing for these two classes in the same Home, at the mutual advantage of each. Thus, our first year was one of many difficulties and trials, and it is not surprising that at its close the matron, though with heart full of Christian love, and many of the managers, who were no less earnest in the work, should feel that it was of too great magnitude for their feeble ability. The matron resigned,—fortunately, we had among our number one of tried philanthropic experience, who had devoted many years to moral reform, who took her place as matron. The attention of the managers gradually became chiefly devoted to the care of children of want, wherever found, and as their work became known, there were as many desolate homes waiting to be filled as there were desolate children to fill them.

Our children have come to us from various sources. They have been those who have lost one or both of their parents, or whose parents by drunkenness or crime were incapacitated for their care, or very often those obliged to be surrendered by poverty. The work was going on prosperously, when the cholera appeared among us, sending to our doors those who had been orphaned by it. Twin infants were thus brought to us of a mother who had been taken from them by this terrible scourge. They, too, soon died of it, and communicated the disease to our devoted matron, who soon became its victim. This was to us, indeed, a day of sadness. But the Lord was with us, and directed us in the choice of her sister, then our assistant matron; young and, as we thought, inexperienced. Her heart was full of faith,—she loved the work, and a stranger in a strange land, she, with unflinching faith in God, felt that it was her mission to carry on that work in which her sister, her dearest friend on earth, had toiled and died. This was not her first experience in trial. A mysterious providence had taken from her in a distant land her husband and her five little children, when she had scarce entered upon womanhood. Hardly had she come

here to seek the sympathies of her sister, when she, too, was taken. Nearly all she loved on earth had been taken from her here, but their angel voices summoned her to this work.

Her sense that they were with him who said: "Suffer little children to come unto me and forbid them not" filled her soul with a heavenly calm, and sanctified to her all of childhood. She could not look upon a child without loving it and desiring to save it as a lamb for the flock of the "Good shepherd," and though over three thousand have passed under her care, each has a place in her heart, but does not so fill it that she has not room for more. Ask about any of them and she can tell you.

As before stated, we commenced without experience, simply with a consciousness that there was a great need to be supplied. We had some records of our work, but nothing we could call a system. We depended more upon the unwritten record before alluded to in the heart of our matron than anything else for the knowledge of its details. Since it grew to be so large, we have made a written record as complete as possible.

When your summons came to us for a report of our doings, with so short notice, it seemed almost impossible to accomplish it, but, by constant labor for three weeks, we are able to present the following replies to the queries you have made.

The result is even surprising to ourselves. 3430 individuals, mostly children, snatched from want, suffering and sin, all of them aided, most of them we trust, saved, at an average expense of less than \$10 each, or twenty-six and two-thirds cents per day.

This however does not include the many contributions that have come to us in other forms: vegetables, occasionally groceries, and especially clothing. Nearly all these children have been clothed, but such have been the free-will offerings of those who have sympathized with the work, that hardly any of our funds have been devoted to this use.

Many of these children have been adopted, many were taken until they were eighteen. Others have been received by us when the sickness or death of one of the parents or other evil, has invaded the household—when despair almost reigned, and when but for aid thus given, parents and children might have been forever separated, thus saving, instead of sundering, the family tie.

Many a family has thus been saved and made happy, and we sometimes think that in no way have we done greater good than in thus bridging over the sea of trial.

As far as our knowledge went, it had been the custom with orphan asylums to bind their children out. Experience had shown too many unions mutually unfortunate, from this system. We have never done it, but have kept a watchful eye over our children, receiving them back again and again, until at last they find their proper place—for there is a place for all. Everyone will find some with whom their tempers will not harmonize and with whom there will be constant friction. While I do not know that I speak too strongly to say that there is no temperament so bad that it cannot find some one to love and by whom to be loved. Circumstances and surroundings mostly decide whether a particular mental characteristic shall prove our bane or blessing.

Less than three-hundred have returned to us more than once, while some have been with us eight, nine, and one eleven times. Many of these have been such as have clung to the institution as their home; and who, after having completed their engagements, have come to us again and again in maturer years, knowing no other home to go to.

Only one of those who have been with us so often, have we reason to fear has gone astray.

Even when children have been adopted, we have had them go first on trial, that the love of the new parents might be made sure before irrevocable steps were taken; and even after that, if found to be needful, we have taken them again.

Thus, though we have had but about 3,400 individuals under our care, we have had nearly 4,700 different entries at the home.

We have not had time to prepare a statistical report of the present status of those who have been under our charge; but hope to be able to give this with our next annual report, when our first twenty years of labor will have closed.

We shall be greatly aided in this if every one, having knowledge of the present circumstances of any child who has gone out from the Home, will communicate it in a note addressed to Mrs. Ann L. Gwynne, 24 Kneeland Street, Boston.

I cannot better close this paper than by giving extracts from the annual reports of the home. The report for 1858 says:—

How shall we undertake this care?

The older system, borrowed from the convent charities of Romanism, is to bring together as many as a large house will contain, and there to keep them and train them till they are nearly of adult age. Such charities are to be commended if we can get nothing better; but they do not fill the full measure of what we want. Even the political economists have come so far as to see—as matter of policy—what our Savior taught us so long since, as matter of principle, that when we take charge of the poor, we must give them the best we have. We must train them to the best of their ability. This conviction is forced on the men of science by the failure of projects less comprehensive; but our Savior announced it when he said, "Do unto others as you would have others do unto you," and, "Inasmuch as you did it not unto one of the least of these, ye did it not to me." "Unto one of the least of these." Some new-born infant, fatherless and motherless. The measure of what we are to do for that child, is what we would do for the Lord himself.

The report for 1860 closes thus:

The idea of the word HOME is of something abiding, and "Temporary Home" sounds almost paradoxical; yet its deeper meaning is fulfilled here, where these forlorn wanderers are welcomed, refreshed by the removing of the earth-soil from their spirits, re-directed, and turned heaven-ward.

All our homes are temporary, and happy are we, if, on our way to our permanent one, we can take some of these little loiterers by the hand, and lead them, or be led by them, to the Father's house.

In the whole twenty years we have only paid about \$150 for expenses of collection.

Boston, June 16, 1866.

STATISTICS OF THE TEMPORARY HOME FOR THE DESTITUTE.

Location—No. 24 Kneeland street, Boston.

Cost of Buildings—\$12,000.

Cost Raised—by private funds entirely, subscriptions and donations.

Capacity of Accommodation—from 30 to 40, comfortably.

When Established—Jan. 1, 1847.

When Opened—Jan. 1, 1847.

Limit of Ages—none absolutely; chiefly from 2 to 10.

Whole number of Inmates since the opening—3430 individuals, of whom

1 was received. 11 times.

5 were received. 9 "

3 " " " " " 8 "

5 " " " " " 7 "

21 " " " " " 6 "

26 " " " " " 5 "

66 " " " " " 4 "

151 " " " " " 3 "

434 " " " " " 2 "

Making 4668 entries.

Males—636. Females—2794.

Present number of Inmates, June 1—Males, 13; Females, 21.

Hours of Labor—none.

Hours in School—about four.

Hours at Meals—as usual in private families.

Hours of Recreation—when not at school or asleep.

Hours of Sleep—as many as are required.

Character of Sleeping Rooms—several beds in each room.

Annual Expenses—last year's, about \$3000; for the five years previous, about \$2000; average, since commencement, \$1750.

Total average for each Child—about \$9.70.

Average daily expense of each Child—26½ cents.

Number of Officers and Employees—2 matrons, 1 teacher, and domestics.

Aggregate Salaries—about \$1000 the past year.

Means of Annual Support, whence Derived—subscriptions, donations, and income of property derived from donations.

Managers, how Appointed—elected by members of the Institution at annual meeting.

By what Authority are Inmates Committed—by the desire of their parents or nearest relations.

What Modes of Reward and Punishment—parental treatment; no modes of reward or punishment recognized.

Average stay of each Inmate—about thirty-seven days; some few over two years.

GEO. WM. BOND,
For the Managers.

THE OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY OF THE ARMY
WASHINGTON, D. C.
JANUARY 1, 1900
SIR:
I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 29th ultimo, in relation to the matter of the appointment of a chaplain to the 1st Cavalry, and in reply to inform you that the same has been forwarded to the proper authorities for their consideration.

I am, Sir, very respectfully,
Your obedient servant,
J. H. COOPER,
Secretary of the Army.

Very truly yours,
J. H. COOPER,
Secretary of the Army.

Enclosed for the Secretary of the Army are two copies of a report of the Adjutant General's Office, dated December 29, 1899, in relation to the matter of the appointment of a chaplain to the 1st Cavalry, and in reply to inform you that the same has been forwarded to the proper authorities for their consideration.

I am, Sir, very respectfully,
Your obedient servant,
J. H. COOPER,
Secretary of the Army.

Respectfully,
J. H. COOPER

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